

NORT' SHOR' VERSES

RICHARD D. WARE

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NORT' SHOR' VERSES

By

RICHARD D. WARE

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FOREWORD

A FLAT country, covered with fir and spruce to sandy beach or wide areas of marsh or tundra. Looking from the sea, an untouched forest. Looking from its shade, waste and desert places.

Down through the evergreens come shallow rivers, thoroughfares to and from the back land for canoes and dugouts, here and there the cleared land of farms along the banks.

Off shore from the wide mouths of some of these streams, a line of outer beach, cast up in the never ending struggle between tide and current, making wide shallow bays between.

Beach and bay seem salient of this North Shore of New Brunswick between the Miramichi and Bay Chaleur.

THE BEACH

The gleaming constellations fade away
Till in the east alone the morning star
Shines like a beacon on the outer bar,
And lights its pathway far across the bay.

Into the sea the curtains of the night
Roll down, tinged roseate ere they disappear.
While overhead the opal sky grows clear,
All radiant with the great sun's dawning light.

Out from the gloom, far as the eye can reach,
Blending with sea and sky into the mist
Where the wide bay and river keep their tryst,
Looms the dark shadow of the long low beach.

All desolate it lies save here and there
A gray, storm beaten hut, where in the spring
The fisher folk their hard won booty bring,
And make rude shelter till the winds are fair.

A band of horses, scattered lowing herds
Of cattle turned half wild roam there, alone
Of all the beasts to claim it for their own
And hold a tenure in that realm of birds.

High in the air, arrayed in echelon,
The honking geese come from their northern isles.
Across the sky in undulating files
Long lines of sable cormorants wing on.

Far in the shallows lonely herons stand,
Like sentinels on guard upon their posts,
Croaking hoarse warning to the feathered hosts
Of coming peril to their peaceful land.

On the low bars the herring gull's harsh cries
Make protest, while the burgomaster scolds
For some rare morsel which his subject holds
As treasure trove, and clamors for the prize.

Like flakes of foam tossed on a listless wind
White kittiwakes with gentle call flit by,
And whirling hordes of restless terns give cry
Till with their screams the very skies are dinned.

The turnstone chuckles as he breaks his fast,
The strident curlew making answer shrill.
The yelping tattlers, watchful, never still,
Mock at the whistling plover speeding past.

All these and more join in the symphony,
Making the solitude more wild and lone,
While never ceasing, rolls in undertone,
The diapason of the mighty sea.

Many of the people who live here are French, descendants of the old time Acadians. Many English, meaning by that persons of English, Scotch or Irish descent, live here too, and it is natural that in their intimate intercourse the persons of both races should undertake to speak the language of their neighbors. The English purport to speak French, rather shame-facedly. The educated persons of French descent speak as good English as one generally hears, but it is the speech of the Frenchman of the farm, the fishing boat or the lumber camp which has the flavor and tang to it which makes his English interesting. There is no fixed standard of conformity. It is doubtful if a given speaker would express himself in exactly the same way a second time. So it is impossible to say that all the French on the North Shore speak English as I have attempted to set it down in their mode here. But a kind of dominant form appears from averaging personal equations and that I have endeavored to adopt and adapt to verse.

The vocabulary of these people is small for their lives are very limited. They are closely in touch with the seasons and the occupations and food supply which come with them. The English words for all these things they know and use. They do most of their

swearing in English, as does the rest of the world. Broadly speaking, they have an English vocabulary for things, but not for thoughts. They still think in French.

All this makes the words at the disposal of one who wishes to express these people in verse very few in number, so perforce one must be simple in recording their simple themes. In the matter of pronunciation, certain words which would never even force a rhyme in academic English are entirely consonant as they are spoken on the Nort' Shor'.

And now to some of the people there and the things of which they speak.

R. D. W.

NORT' SHOR' VERSES

TRANQUIL McGRAW

Bonjou' M'sieu'; McGraw? Tranquil?
La maison? Ouai; ou demeure-t-il?
Ouai, je comprends; vous parlez bien
Monsieur; vous êtes Americain?
Je croyais; mais je parle l'Anglais;
Dat be more easier to say
For you? I work once at Bangór;
I know dat man—Tranquil McGraw.

He fine man too; stonemason? Ouai;
De bes' along de whole Nort' Shor';
He get big wages every day!
From Burn' Church to St. Isadore
Dey sen' for heem, an' Chatham too
Sometam, when dere is work to do.
De Neguac stone church—you saw?
He boss dat job—Tranquil McGraw.

De pries', he proud o' dat all right;
Fine buildin' for de peop' live dere.
Out in de bay it mak' great sight,

Nort' Shor' Verses

An' on de Sunday for de prayer
De team' dey come from all aroun';
In all de parish you won't foun'
One team dat isn' goin' for
Dat church he buil'—Tranquil McGraw.

I go dere once; de priest he spe'k
About de house upon de rock;
How she not fall in de eart'qu'eke
But stan' up strong again' de shock
An' fall not, when de oders fall;
An' all de eye turn to de wall.
Dey un'erstan' good, when dey saw
God's house he buil'—Tranquil McGraw.

An' den de pries' say by de work
You know de man, or somet'ing lak;
Le Bon Dieu, He no call de shirk
Nor tak' to Heem de man dat strike.
An' den I t'ink, eef He call me
Some day, chêt moi, at Tracadie,
I be all right; pas peur pour moi
Eef I lak' heem—Tranquil McGraw.

You buil' de house? He ees de man
You want for dat, ah, c'est b'en sûre;
He lay de stone to mak' her stan'
Jus' like de rock in de scripture.
He work like two man all alone!
He mix de mort', he face de stone;
He fix de stove-pipe so she *draw*,—
He dam fine man—Tranquil McGraw.

THE MIGRANT

We tak de lobster boat one day,
Me an' de ole Philos
An sail aroun' besi' de bay
Out w'ere de codfish was;
Ten' 'leven fadom w'ere we lay;
De lan' seem almos' los'.

We catch dem purty good all right
Until de tide turn nor'
W'en dey seem los' de appetite
An' won' tak clam no mor.
An' den de win' she come, a fright,
Nor'wes' right off de shor'.

Philos he say she goin' to las'
An' he right too, ba gee!
Befor' we got de anchor fas'
She's takin' on de sea,
But we h'ist all de sail we da's
An' beat for de gully.

She poun' an' jump like anyt'ing;
I never see de wors';
De squall dey hit her an' she swing
Mos' clear off on de co'rs',
W'en all to once we hear de sing
Of leetle bird dat's los'.

We see heem comin' 'cross de wave
All jompin' up aroun';
One tam he mak eet de close shave,—
We tink dat tam he drown,
But he jomp too; he purty brave
Way off dere off de groun'.

He's comin' for de boat for sure,
An' w'at you t'ink o' dat!
De firs' place w'ere he come aboar'
Was on Philos' ole hat,
Lak fedder trimmin' de girl' wore
He sit so still an' plat.

He still! He soun' asleep, dat's w'y;
De minute he lan' dere
He grab de hat an' close de eye;

He sure all be't for fair;
An' Philos lay de hat insi',—
He res' mos' quiet dere.

Bimeby he wake all right encore;
He ruffle up de coat
An' pick for bug aroun' de boar'
An' mak chirp in de t'roat.
He seem no want to fly some more;
Jus' tromp aroun' de boat.

He stay wit' us de whole way t'rough
Till we come in de bay,
So calm an' still you'd never knew
De blow outsi' dat day.
An' den de leetle feller flew
Off to de beach away.

An' ole Philos he say lak prière,
He watchin' at heem go,
"W'en I am ole an' wore wit' care
I t'ink I'd lak to know
Dere'll be a boat to tak me w'ere
It's calm an' still, jus' so."

THE SMELT SHANTY

Dose leetle house, tar-pape' an' lat'?
Dey everyw'ere plaintee:
You ax dey use for tak de bat'?
Non, dose be smelt shantee.
De fisherman dey live in dose
De winter on de ice;
No matter how de col' win' blows
Dey're warm you be surpris'.

Eet mos lak village on de bay
After de firs' ice come,
W'en all de man mak préparé
An breeng de leetle home.
De smelt be leetle feesh all right
But beeg t'ing for de peop'.
Some tam de one haul on de night
Pay all de winter keep.

You on de jomp on all de tide'
De fishin' bad nor good,

An' res' de w'ile dey set in side
An' mak pile on de wood.
Some tam some feller fetch de treat
W'it some frien' dat he foun',
An' all pile on de bonk an' seat
An' tell de yarn aroun'.

I 'member me I hear dat way
About de tam Jock Breaux
Get mash hess'f de mos' firs' day
He try mak new seine go.
De seine he never work befor';
She shap' lak de beeg purse;
She come all roll up from de stor'
An' have to spread her firs'.

So Jock he open up her mout'
For measure on piquet
An' start to turn her insi' out
Befor' he mak her set.
She won' come out so he crawl in
To catch hol' on de en'
An' den hees tro'ble dey begin
Lak w'at de devil sen'.

He mash de button on de sleeve
An' w'en he try feex dat
De win' she give de seine a heave
An' she knock off de hat.
He grab for heem, de seine grab too,
An' mash de feet aroun',
An' w'en he try to haul dem t'rough,
She mak de arm fas' boun'.

An' den he holler an' he bawl
All tie' lak bag o' meal,
An' roun' de ice he flop an' crawl
Jus' lak strange kin' o' seal.
Some feller' in de shantee near
All come a-jompin' out,
An' can' make out de firs' dey hear
W'at all de row about.

Mos' o' de word he lettin' go,
Jus' same w'en makin' prière,
But w'en dey see ol' Jock dey know
Soch t'ing don' come from dere.
De t'ing he roar I won' tell you;
Mos' everyt'ing he say,
An' sure I hope dat de bon Dieu
Have turn de ear away.

Dose fellers mos die laffin' 'fore
Dey get him out again,
An' den dey feex t'ing up once more
An' help heem wit' de seine.
But dey don' chop for heem no hole,
For dere' no need to do;
De way ole Jock he swear dey tol'
Jus' melt de ice clear t'rough.

MA' LOU'

We don' see de ol' Ma' Lou'
Polin' up along de shor'
From de Portage any mor',
For he die de fall afor',
An' de ole patch'up canoe
She done for too.

Fonny t'ing dat name, dat's true;
"Bad wolf" w'at it mean you say,
For he not'ing 't all dat way;
Bon courage an' toujou'gaie,
Mos' lak some kin' dog you knew
Nor de Ma' Lou.

All hees life he ron de bay
In de ol' patch'up canoe.
I suppose she once be new
Afore all de leak' come t'rough,
But he tar her up some way
An' mak her stay.

Nort' Shor' Verses

But he proud o' her, no fear,
An' de ol' man alway' say
She de fas'est on de bay
If he feex her up some day;
She be all right sure nex' year
If he be here.

He go shootin' in de fall
On de ol' sink-box he buil'
Off de ol' boar' off de mill
Leakin' so she lak to fill
W'en dere any kin' o' squall
Or wave at all.

But he proud o' her, no fear,
An' de ol' man alway' say
She de tightes' on de bay
If he feex her up some day;
She be all right sure nex' year
If he be here.

An' you never see de wors'
Dan de gun all tie wit' tow
An' de lock all rus' up so

Mos' de tam she never go;
Me, I let de bird' go firs'
For fear she burs'.

But he proud o' her, no fear,
An' de ol' man alway' say
She shoot hardes' on de bay
If he fix her up some day.
She be all right sure nex' year
If he be here.

Everyt'ing he have de bes';
All content and satisfy:
Jus' de sam' he goin' to try
Mak her better by an' by;
But he never mak success
To do de res'.

An' now it come dis year
An' de ol' patch'up canoe
An' de sink-box an' gun too
Dey are all t'rough;
For dey all know purty clear
Dat he ain't here.

THE GIRLS

De winter he is gone at las';
I know she soon be spring;
De goose he honkin' in de bay
An' leetle bird mak sing.
But dere's no need o' e'der dem
Be tellin' dat to me
W'en flock o' girl come back some more
Head' for de factoree.

Girl', girl', girl'!
Dey're all come in for hirin'.
Girl', girl', girl'!
Dey're all aroun' de place.
Off de back wood' dey're arrivin',
Off de farm' dey come a-drivin'
An' ba gee, I lak to see dem
Wit' de purty laffin' face.

Dey come between de ice go out
An' w'en de herraw run,
Two, t'ree day an' dey're gone ag'in

Ontil de fishin's done.
Dey pick de lobster for de can,—
Dat's w'at de job dere be,
But plaintee girl she pick her man
Off on de factoree.

Girl', girl', girl'! etc.

An' w'en she got heem pick' an can'
An' tout b'en marié
Dere never come de spring some more
Dat she can' kip away.
I spec' she 'member her dat night
W'en he ax her to be
Hees famme—an' squeeze her purty tight
Off on de factoree.

Girl', girl', girl'! etc.

W'en she gran'mère she jus' de same';
She get too ol' to teach;
She hire wit' de yo'nges' girl
An' rosh off on de beach.
She mak de pique-nique over dere

An' one t'ing certainlee,
De girl' stay girl' all res' her life
Off on de factoree.

Girl', girl', girl'! etc.

THE SANDPIPER

In winter tam it purty still along de bay an' in de wood'
W'en all de bird' dey gone away ;
It mak too col' for dem to stay
Wit'out no wood pile an' no food,
But dey come back jus' soon dey can; dey lak de
Nort' Shor' purty good.

De ole goose come along de firs', right off de open
water show ;
He mus' be watchin' off de sky
For see w'ich course he mak de fly
So queek he always seem to know.
He soun' good too w'en he call out de spring she come
an' winter go.

Some morn' bimeby you wak' by hear de robin
singin' in de tree ;
It bon fortune he in your fiel' ;
De grain an' potat' mak gran' yiel'
W'ere de firs' robin firs' get see.

It fine to see heem sittin' dere an' hear heem mak d
melodie.

An' w'en de ice is off de shor' you go an' tak de ol
bateau

For set de net for de herraw ;

An' roun' de crick de firs' you saw

De leetle san' snipe an' you know

De musique feller come for shor' w'en he burs' out an
let her go.

An' it's toodle-e-oodle-e-oo! he say

W'en he come back again in de spring.

It mus' be de springtam get into de t'roat

For de fall he don' say mos' not'ing.

Toodle-e-oodle-e-oodle-e-oo!

Toodle-e-oodle-e-oo!

An' de leetle bird' song be so full o' de glad

It set de man' heart singin' too.

THE SILVER THAW

De silver t'aw? I know dat t'ing;
La gêlee blanche we call;
She come mos' tam jus' 'fore de spring,
Sometam late in de fall,
W'en de rain she come an' it's col', col', col',
An' she freeze on de bush and grass,
An' de tree' ben' down wit' w'at dey hol'
On de branch, touts pleins de glâce.

W'en de storm she go an' de sun he shine
Ba gee, it mak' great sight,
W'en all de fiel' an' bush an' vine
Mak' rainbow wit' de light.
De win' she mak' dem jomp an' play,
An' 'sh-la! in de ear
Soun' leetle bell lak clôches des fays
Meex een de air you hear.

De birch she purties' of all
Sure t'ing, I t'ink mesel',
All w'ite she gleam t'ru de crystal

Lak gran' bois de chandelle.
De spruce an' var mak not moch show;
Dey froze on de solid jonk,
Wit' leetle glaciers dat grow
On de branch out from de tronk.

De silver t'aw she fine to see
W'en de wedder turn roun' gran',
But all tam too I 'member, me,
She hard on de poor man.
Dere's one tam 'bout t'ree year ago
Dis parish don' forget,
W'en to de door o' Jean Comeau
De silver t'aw brought deat'.

Jean build heem small cabane dat fall
On lot by de Portage.
He got no money mos' at all
But plaintee bon courage,
So femme an' bébé dere he bring
W'ile he go in de wood'
An' earn de money till de spring
W'en he mak feex heem good.

So dere dey live de winter t'rough,
Julie an' le bébé;
It purty lonesome out dere too,—
Not many team dat way.
I go dere once to mak de smile
An' foun' de bébé seek,
An' w'en I look at de woodpile
I hope dat Jean come queek.

'Fore dat, two—t'ree day after den,
De silver t'aw come firs',
An' I don' mos' have min' me w'en
I never see de wors'.
De win' she come up in de night
Wil' wit' de sleet an' rain.
I won'er eef ma roof on tight
She blow soch horricane.

Nex' mornin' Jean he come to me;
He come out day before
An' spen' de night at Tracadie,—
Want somet'ings off de store.
Dat night he buy hees groceries
An pack on hees han'-sled

An' come my house so moch airlee
I mos' not out my bed.

He have some tea an' den we go ;
I tak' part of hees load.
De ice she ma' de fine rainbow
An' good haul on de road.
An' Jean he laugh an' talk so gay
De winter t'rough all right
Dat I could not'ing 'tall to say,—
An' den hees face turn w'ite.

De leetle house stan' dere all right,—
Wit'out no roof at all.
De win' blow heem off on de night ;
Mos' to de road he fall.
De door swing open mak de moan
Lak some one seek to die,
An' Jean he rosh t'rough dere alone
De fear in bot' his eye.

Den me,—an' oh, Bon Dieu I see
W'at pauvre Jean Comeau saw
W'en he come foun' hees familee
Deat in de silver t'aw.

Behin' de empty stove she crawl,
La femme wit' le bébé,
All wrap in quilt an' leetle shawl
To keep de col' away.

She do her bes', but ah, tout vain,
W'en roof an' stove-pipe go.
Dey die dere in de col' an' rain
Jus' lak we fin' dem so.
Tout crystal were dey settin' dere,—
An' seem de bes' rainbow
Com' jompin' in de sunlight w'ere
Bébé hees quilt mak' show.

THE COFFIN

Sometam eet strang' how t'ing come 'roun'
Nobody know pourquoi;
Mos' any place you go you foun'
Some fonny t'ing you saw.
Lak tam w'en Beel Comeau he die
An' dey can' fin' no boar',
For mak sarceuil for heem to lie;
Dat comical for sure.

Beel he poor man but he use' say
Dere's one t'ing he mos' proud,
Dat ees he bein' pure Français
An' not lak de meex crowd.
He say France mos' gran' in de worl'
Of all de ole co'ntree,
An' show you w'ere he foun' it tol'
In book you call his'tree.

De Revolution dey have
He say mak all man free,
Instead of bein' lak de slav'

Lak all poor man mus' be.
He know de song dey mak dat tam,—
De Marseillaise dey call,
An' eet fine musique too, by dam!,
Eet mak de back jus' crawl.

Beel go to Chatham once and see
A French sheep by de shor',
A flyin' flag off ole co'ntree
Dey call de tri-color.
Dat flag, she mak Beel moch excite;
She red an' w'ite an' blue,
An' he get purty dronk dat night
W'ile he drink her "salut!"

Well, fore he die, anoder sheep,
De "Rolluf," she get wreck',
An' Snowball buy her for to streep;
She purty bad I 'spec'.
An' on de deck was small cabane
De boss he say no good,
An' give to me an' oder man
For mak de fire wood.

Insi' de cabane all paint' new
Wit' plaintee beeg gol' line;
Mos' every color on her too;
Well b'ys! eet mak her fine.
But we bre'k her up bes' we can;
Save window an' de door',
An' den mes'f an' oder man
Pole piece' 'cross by our shor'.

Den Beel he die afore de fall
An' hees famme she sen' wor',
Dere can' be enterrement at all
Wit'out she get some boar'.
An' me, I t'ink of de cabane
An' sen' she make dose do;
An' w'en I see, dere Beel lie, gran'
Wit' red an w'ite an' blue.

THE CHICKENS

Ned Bushey he tol' me dat yarn;
He say it true t'ing too,—
An' ole Ned he sure hones' man
For all me never knew,—
'Bout dat tam w'en all hees poulets
An' rooster too he tell
Get dronk jus' lak in de ole tam
De night afore Noël.

Dat mornin' he drive home from town
Wit' somet'ing from de store,
De oatmeal, rice, raisin', cornmeal
An' oder t'ing some more,
An' den, it comin' Chris'mas tam
Wi't all dose t'ing to eat
He get two bottle rye w'iskey
To mak hees frien' de treat.

Le gros garçon he bring beeg box
To tak de t'ing he fin',
W'en up he sleep an' down he go
Jus' right on de behin'.

De bottle bre'k, de bag mak tear ;
De rice an' meal all wet,
Wit' raisin scatter lak gâteau,
Mak plaintee mess you bet.

Dere's not'ing ain' no good at all,
So Ned he turn aroun'
An' say to t'row de stoff away
W'ile he drive back to town.
W'en he come back hees famme meet heem ;
"Come queeck, come queeck," she say ;
"Jus' put de hoss' up in de barn
An' come see les poulets."

He go, and dere upon de floor
Lie de 'ole familee,
Upon de side, upon de back,
Touts mort, mos' certainlee.
Dey t'ink de poison come to dem
An' no be right to sell ;
Jus' same de famme t'ink she make save
De fedder jus' as well.

So her an' de yo'ng girl tak hol'
An' do dat job all right.

De fedder dey mos' fill one tick
W'en dey get t'rough come night.
Dey leave de bird all in de pile,
Tak tick an come away,
An' all han' go to bed bimeby,
Ontil com' Chris'mas day.

Dey all wak' up airlee nex' day
By hear de rooster crow,
An' dere he be wit' de poulets
Stan' out dere in de snow!
He scratch de groun' an' lift de head
An' give salut de morn',
Not so moch fedder on de back
Lak w'en he hatch an' born.

De bird don' seem moch min' de col'
A-walkin' roun' outsi',
But mak de sight so comical
Ole Ned laff mos' to die.
An' den he say, jus' to heesee'f
W'ile he crawl in de bed,
"It better snow have on de feet
D'an ice upon de head."

THE MASTERPIECE

Too bad how plaintee feller swear,
But dey don' mean not'ing;
Dey jus' mak beeg noise wit' de mout'
Lak robin have to sing,
But you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

He Frenchman an' spe'k English too,
So he know all de word'.
He keep bot' language on de jomp
De wors' you never heard,
Sure you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

La Veille des Touts Saints—you know dat,
W'at come roun' in de fall,—
De boy' an' girl' play all kin' treeck
An' no one min' at all,—
But you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

De ol' peop' say de devil com'
An' hunt de soul' dat night,
An' so dey burn lamp' an' chandelle
For scare heem wit' de light;
But he never hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

An' on dat night dey mak' de prière
Afore dey blow dem out,
Deirse'f and familee for save
From devil flyin' 'bout.
An' you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

Some boy' know Jock Breaux do dis t'ing
An' bring de beeg black ram
Wit' ogly eye an' long curl' horn
An' wait for hees bed tam.
An' you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go.

Dey watch ontill he kneelin' dere
An' den dey h'is' de ram,
An' in de middle o' de prière

Right t'rough de window—bam!
An' you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

He tak one look,—an' w'en he see
De devil dere hese'f,
Wit' horn an' tail an' beeg red eye,
He almos' los' hees bre'f:
An' you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

De ram he bawl an' shak' de horn
An' Jock jomp off de floor,
Right t'rough de oder window-sash,—
Don' bodder wit' no door,
An' you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux
Some tam he let her go!

But w'en he get outsi' de house
An' foun' he get away
He shout 'bout honder' kin' o' damn
An' mos' de sam sacrés.
Sure you ought'er hear ol' Jock Breaux,
Dat tam he let her go!

He spen' de night at neighbor' house ;
He won' dare go back home,
An' you go ax heem, he say now
Sure 'nuf de devil com',
But you'll never hear ol' Jock Breaux
Lak de tam he let her go !

THE LOBSTER BOATS

From 'Scuminac to Shippegan,
Along de 'ole Nort' Shor',
From Miscou on to Caraquet,
An' den ag'in some mor',
Men are workin' on de fact'ree beach'
Afor' de bre'k o' day;
All han' torn out to ron de line'
An' get de boat' away.

Torn out! Lonch ho! Up you're gettin dere!
Com'! Let's 'ear som' feet in dere a-t'ompin' on de
flo'r!

Wak' up b'ys! Get your tea!
Shak' up b'ys! Come wit' me
W'ere de boat' is layin'
Out dere on de shor'.

Dey're layin' up among de grass.
De keel' all frozen in,
But dere's a crew o' t'orty man

To haul dem clear ag'in;
An' de fair full moon is shinin'
To 'elp dem tak' de hol',
An' eet mak' de dirty oiler'
Look lak' suit' o' gleamin' gol'.

Torn out! Lonch ho! Up you're gettin' dere!
Com'! Let's 'ear som' feet in dere a-t'ompin' on de
flo'r!

Wak' up b'ys! Get your tea!
Shak' up b'ys! Come wit' me
W'ere de boat' is layin'
Out dere on de shor'.

'Eave up de ballas' into her
An' stow de c'il' o' line!
Mak' fas' de buoy' an' anchor' dere!
De tide's a-raisin' fine!
All clear! H'is' up de for's'l,—vite!
De wave' is at her snout!
Aboar', aboar', an' min' de sheet!
De b'ys will shov' 'er out!

Now b'ys! Lift 'er b'ys! Chock a roller dere!

Everybody tak' a leetle all aroun' de boat!

Jack 'er b'ys! jomp 'er b'ys!

Walk 'er b'ys! homp'er b'ys!

Dere she goes a-rollin'!

W'oop-ee! she's afloat!

MR. SALTONSTALL

I 'member me mos' twenty year'
De firs' Americain' com' 'ere
For shootin' on de beach an' flat';
Dey seem to fin' gran' sport in dat.
Dey kin' man too; I know mos' all;
I guide for Mr. Saltumstall.

At John Wishar' dey use' to boar'.
I get my man 'tween t'ree an' four
An' den we sail across de bay
To mak' de beach 'for' bre'k o' day.
De bird' sure dere jos' at de dawn,
An' so be Mr. Sollonstorn.

'Fore den me call all dem bird' snipe,
But he know t'orty name' ba cripe',
De black breas'—an' de red breas' too,—
De torn-ston', yallerleg, corlew;
I learn dem all an' plaintee mor'
W'en I guide Mr. Saltonstor'.

One tam we camp in ol' fact'ree,
An' ba gosh how he 'ate de flea!
Dere plaintee dose out on de beach,
An' sure dey go for heem lak leech.
"De leetle fellers," w'at he call,
W'en I guide Mr. Sontalsall.

W'en he go he give me de suit
O' oiler' an' hees robber boot'
He wear up 'ere, an two box' shell';
Ba gee, he tre't me purty well.
I wish he comin' back nex' fall
An' me guide Mr. Sollumstall.

THE GHOST

Las' 'arves' tam Will Wishart foun'
He have de fine crop in de groun'
O' potat'.

Dey mus' be dog, so he engage
A crowd from down by de Portage
To do dat.

Dey all get dere plaintee airlee;
Will kip de store an' have good tea
An' molass'.
He give dem wages an' four meal';
He know how he mus' mak' dem feel
For work fas'.

All hand' work hard, de girl' an' men,
An' Will, he glad to see de en'
So com' queeck,
W'en after workin' two, t'ree day,
Com' evenin' dey say dey won' stay,—
Dey're 'omeseeck!

Will, he sure got dat t'ing to stop;
Mebbe he lose de 'ole hees crop

 If dey go.

He say dey go an' get deir tea,
An' w'ile dey're eatin', Will dey see
 Away go.

Dat seem all right, so dey hang 'roun'
Ontil eet gettin' dark dey foun'

 For walkin',

An' den de 'ole crowd start along
Wit' plaintee shout, an' laugh an' song
 An' talkin'.

Dey com' along to de causeway
All proud to mak' de get-away,
 An' stop dere.

From out a bush dere com' a groan;
An' den a w'ite t'ing mak' a moan!
 Two drop dere.

One holler "qu'ous ce que ci que c'aw!"
Anodder, "w'at's dat t'ing I saw
 A-wavin!"

"A ghos' !" anodder one yell out,
An' all hand' torn aroun' about
A-ravin'.

Two feller tak' across de ma'sh,
An' Will could hear mor'n t'orty spash'
O' fallin'
As he stan' dere an' wave de sheet
He'd wrop hees se'f de head an' feet,
An' bawlin'.

W'en he com' 'ome dere was de crowd,
So scare' no one dare spik aloud
W'en he say
"You t'ink you stick to de potat'?"
I t'ought I hear some bawlin' at
De causeway."

Nex' day dey dig away lak mad;
Mos' every one t'ink sure dey had
A warnin'.
An' w'en com' evenin', dere's de crop;
Ba gee, Will have to let dem stop
Till mornin'.

THE TEAMSTERS

Aw, de haulin's well mos' done;
Anodder touch o' sun
Sure mak' de road' a fright, altogedder.
De ice she goin' fas an' eet never boun' to las'
Onless dere com' a shif' o' nor'-wes' wedder.
De ronner' grit an' grin'
An' de track dey leave behin'
Cut' right down to de groun' in forty place'.
De bridge', dey are all bare
An' she' meltin' everyw'ere.
Eet play 'Ell on de riggin' an' de trace'.

Haulin' down to Tracadie,
To Tracadie, to Tracadie,
Any man who say can 'ave de job for all o' me.
Liftin', shiftin' every load,
Haulin', crawlin' down de road,
Dat's de trip we mak to Tracadie.

But w'en we all get t'rough,
De firs' t'ing dere's to do
Is mak' de start de neares' place is handy,

Wit' som' "square face" up to Joe'
For de finger' an' de toe'
Or leetle drink off Charley' ole French brandy.
He say " 'ave dis one wit' me,"
An' de b'ys dey all agree,
An' de bottle go a-tackin' 'cross de table
Till dey're jos' a leetle full;—
Den dere's jos' anodder pull
An' we go an' get de horse' out in de stable.

Trottin' 'ome from Tracadie,
From Tracadie, from Tracadie,
Anyman an' everyman feel' jos' as fine as me.
Jinglin' janglin' up de road,
Every b'y's a proper load
W'en he start' away from Tracadie.

THE HERRING FISHING

W'en de ice she go out, aroun' de first' o' May
Den de herraw dey com' een down to Neguac bay.
No one know' w'en de word com' t'rough,
So eet's grab all de net' an' shove de canoe,
An' all hand' aboar' for Hay Islan'.

All de boat' an' de scow' an' de leaky ol' bateaux
An' de pirog' an' canoe', anyt'ing to mak' her go,
Start along wit' de sail an' de paddle an' de pole
For to fetch wit' de tide at de bass fishin' hole,
All hand' boun' for Hay Islan'.

Den dey tie on de stone an' drive de picquet pole',
An' dey set de ol' net' on de channel by de shoal
W'ere de weed' an' de grass cover' t'ick w'it' de spawn,
An' den mak' de camp on de beach till de morn'
An' de flood o' de tide at Hay Islan'.

All de float' dey be down an' dat mean de net' be full,
An' dey know dat ees so w'en dey tak' hol' for de pull.
Dere dey hang in de mash' by de honder' in de row,

An' dey shine in de sun lak de gran' rainbow,
All roun' de boat' at Hay Islan'.

W'en dey shak' out de feesh, all de flappin' o' de tail'
On de boat' feel de air full o' shinin' silver scale'
An' dey steeck on de face an' de w'isker' an' de han'
So dat w'ich be de herraw an' w'ich be de man
Dat hard to say at Hay Islan'.

THE POACHERS

De law, she fonny t'ing ba gee ;
Som' tam she mak' de common sense
An' oder tam she mak' eet be
Som' leetle t'ing de grand offence.
Now tak' eet een dese rivièr
De salmon ac' soch fonny way
Dey don' ron up 'fore Septembèr
An' den be close tam, de law say.

An' t'ink o' de poor man who see
De beeg feesh jompin' by hees door
Wit' no meat for hees familee !
Dat seem' to me de fullish law.
An' all de b'y' dey t'ink so too,
An' w'en dey know de salmon ron
De firs' dark night dey tak' canoe
An' net' an' all aboar' for fon.

Ol' Simon Murray go en garde.
He dead now ; good ol' feller too ;
He purty cute, an' he work hard

A' paddlin' dat ol' canoe.
Som' tam me get de net jos' set
An' dere de Simon 'long de shor'
Mos' in de alder' he can get,—
An' I don' feesh *dat* net no mor'.

Some' tam dey set an ol' net firs'
An' set de good net up mor' high,
So w'en he com' he tak' de wors'
An' don' com' w'ere de oder lie.
Som' tam dey fool heem, som' tam no;
Som' tam dey mak' de dam good haul;
Som' tam he tak' de net an' go,
An' dat's de way all t'rough de fall.

I 'member me one treeck all right
T'ree feller play on de ol' man;
Dey know he com' down home one night
An' so dose feller mak' de plan
Dat tam dey go an' feesh de stream,
An' so de ol' man never knew
Dey pass hees place, dey tak' de team
An' don' go up in de canoe.

Dat all work fine an' dere dey be.
Dey tie de hors' a leetle back,
An' bile de kettle for deir tea
Afore de night com', black, black, black.
Den een de bush' by de piquette,
A-list'nin' for ol' Simon's pole,
Dey hear de salmon strike de net,
A-sploshin' w'en de mash tak' hol'.

Dat soun' good too; dey know for sure
Dey plaintee feesh for all han' dere
W'en dey haul een an' mak' secure,—
An' den out on de rivière
Dey hear de cough ol' Simon mak',
An' den dey hear heem bomp de float';
An' all de salmon in de tak'
Seem tryin' to jomp een hees boat.

Vite! vite! one of de feller say;
Grab hol' de seine an' de piquette
An' han' dem een to me dis way;
Ol' Simon never tak' *dis* net,
So den de feller w'at he tol'
He tie her to de hors' een dere,

An' w'en ol' Simon got de hol'
Dey h'ist heem out o'dat for fair.

He com' right out o' de canoe,
Den t'rough de mud up een de wood',
Ol' Simon an' de salmon too,
An' de ol' man was bawlin' good.
But dey don' stop de hors' at all,
An' w'en he lose de hol' bimeby,
Dey kip on till dey out o' call
An' den dey mos' near laff to die.

An' so he never tak' dat net:
Dey save her an' some feesh beside,
An' w'en he get back w'ere she set
Hees canoe gone off on de tide.
He purty lame for walkin' too
But he get down some tam nex' day,
An' w'en he die he never knew
W'at feller' haul deir net dat way.

PHILOMÈLE

“All dose my chile, an’ dere’ som’ mor’
A-ronnin’ ’roun’ de place som’ w’ere.
Dey de bes’ crop on de Nort’ Shor’;
Dere ain’ no harves’ failin’ dere
W’en all de man be hommes gallants
De way dey be een Canadaw.

Sure,—w’en me see me know de name’;
Dey got mos’ all de name’ dere be;
De pries’ he say las’ tam he came
He only got lef’ two or t’ree.
Me don’ know den w’at he mak’ do,—
An’ still he give dat chile dere two.

She christen’ Agnes w’en she born;
Me t’ink dat six eight year ago;
An’ den de oder chile dey lorn
Dat mean de lamb, an’ w’en dey know
Dey holler “baa” w’en she go by
An’ w’en she hear, dat mak’ her cry.

So she don' lak be on de way
For school nor erran' to de stor',
An' w'en me tell de pries' he say
He won' have dose t'ing any mor'.
He give her de new name she call'
An' dey don' bodder her at all.

So Philomèle since den she be
Dat très jolie, me t'ink dat so.
W'at ees dat t'ing you say to me?
Dat mean de t'rosh you say you know?
Mon Dieu, don' tell de oder chile
Nor dey be w'istlin' all de w'ile.

De pries' he feex t'ing up befor'
An' put stop to dat fullish game,
But me can't go to heem som' mor'
An' ax heem for anoder name.
He only got two t'ree mor' lef'
An' me 'n' ma femme need dose oursef'.

THE DANCE

W'at shall I 'member me de mos' w'en I be ol' an' tire',
A-waitin' for de spring to com' dat I shall never see,
An' pass de tam wit' de ol' pipe clos' up besi' de fire,
A-seein' ol' face' een de smoke dat call de memorie'
O' de tam w'en de blood ron hot an' wil'
An' de heart an' han' be strong;
W'en livin' be som't'ing wort' w'ile
An' life can' las' too long.

Eet won' be de bigges' shot I mak'
On de dock nor brant nor goose;
Eet won' be de tam I see me tak'
To de tree from de beeg bull moose.
Eet won' be de tam I mos' near die
On de track o' de caribou;
Eet won' be de tam I ketch outsi'
Een de horricane dat blew,

But me see een de smoke som' purty face'
Wit' mout' pour les becs chères,
De ribbon' flyin' roun' de wais'
An' flower' een de hair,

An' me hear de soun' o' de stompin' feet
W'ile de feedle sing an' screech.
Dat be de memorie mos' sweet—
De dance off on de beach.

De stomp an' de shoffle on de sand on de floor
Soun' lak de growl o' de sea on de shor',
An' pound on de brain lak de beat o' de drum,
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom.
De head go 'roun' an' de heart-beat com';
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom.
De feller wit' de feedle don' mak' no soun';
Dose tune' he play mus' be sure get drown'
In de *tom-tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom.*

W'en de boss he com' an' he say shut her down
Den all han' up for de all han' roun'
To de *tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom;*
An' de girl all holler w'en he put out all de light',
An' de feller' hol' dem tight w'en dey pile out een de
night
Wit' de *tom-tor-raw-rom* still a-tompin' een de head
An' on dose night' nobody go to bed,
For de *tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom,*
Tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom.

I tak een all de dance' dere den,
Firs' on de floor an' up de las',
An' I don' mos' remember w'en
I let de purty face go pas'.
An' den one night at de Gullee
I see a new girl t'rough de door,
An' I know dat de girl for me,
An' I no play dose game' no mor'.

I ax her to dance an' she say dat she will do;
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom;
An' eet ain' very long afore I know dat she knew
Dat I be her man an' her tam com' too;
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom;
So I hug her tight an' she hug me som';
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom;
Her feller see dat an' he want to mak' de fight,
But I soon feex dat man all right.
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom;
An' w'en all de light' dey go out,—no heed;
De star' mak' all de light' we need.
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom;
Tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom.

W'en de fishin' be done, I sail her 'cross de bay,
An' we go to de pries' an' be mariés,
An' de frien' an de neighbor' an' all han' com'
An' dance t'ree day to de *tom-tor-raw-rom*,
Tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom.

Dose be de t'ing I 'member me w'en I be settin' so;
Dose be de fines' memories, so far I see dem now.
Som' o' dose t'ing' I bes' forget dey be de one' won' go;
I s'pose dose oder face' sure com' een spite o'all de vow,
Wit' de *tom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom*,
Tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom.
But eef she be dere so I hol' her han'
De waitin' won' be so hard to stan'
For she hear too an' onderstan'
De *tom-tor-raw-rom-tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom*,
Tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom, tor-raw-rom.

THE LAWSUIT

Jim Rober'son he kip de stor',
De one dey call Black Jim,
An' Joe Connor he buy de flour,
One barr'l off'n him.

Joe never have no monnaie 'tall
An' he boun' for de wood',
An' give de order for hees peeg
For mak' de bill stan' good.

Jim haul de flour to hees place
W'at de ol' woman kip,
An' dere he see de fine yong peeg
Besi' de door, aslip.
So Jim he see he get de peeg
But he don' not'ing say,
An' t'ink he let her fat heem up
'Fore takin' heem away.

Well, dat raise hell; anoder man
He com' wit order off'n Joe,
An' after row wit' ol' woman

He tak' de peeg an go.
So w'en Jim t'ink he plaintee beeg
An' tak' de team an call,
Ba gee, he fin' he get no peeg,
An' pork be high dat fall.

Now Jim, he Jostice o' de Peace,
An' w'en he hear Joe stay
Back home ag'in, he sen' polis
To sorve de papier
Dat say Joe com' to co'rt dat day,
An' give heem onderstan'
Eef he don't get de monnaie pay'
He fetch de peeg or man.

O' co'rse de polis fin' no peeg,
So he tak' hol' o' Joe,
An' Joe he swear an' talkin' beeg
He be dam eef he go;
But de polis he hol' de grip
An' chock heem een de team
An' set on Joe de res' de trip
He haul heem back to Jim.

He shov' Joe een de back room dere
W'ere Jim tak' heem een han'
An' say he got dat treeck to square
Or to de jail he lan'.
Den Joe he try to mak' de sneak
An' get out t'rough de door,
But Jim an' de polis grab queeck
An' all han' to de floor.

De table fall, de stove she go,
De chair dey keeck aroun',
An' mak dat room de holy show
W'ile dey hol' Connor down.
Bimeby dey feex heem so he lay;
He don' fool dem, no fear,
W'en een walk oder man an' say
"Dey tell Joe Connor here."

"He be," say Jim, "dat's true dey tol;"
An' den de feller say,
"Com' Joe, how 'bout dat peeg you stole
W'en you leave me las' May?"
"By dam," say Jim, "dat leave me beat;

De peeg an' case I los';—"

An' den he stan' Joe on hees feet—

"But I collec' de cos'."

De firs' ponch hit heem een de eye,
De nex' one on de jaw;
Sure, Joe don' need look at de sky
For watch de star' he saw.
Den Jim he say to oder man
"You bes' collec' your pay
W'ile de co'rt an' polis on han'
See he don' get away."

Well, w'en dat feller he get t'rough
Joe look lak' he gone blin',
An' sure he mus' be black an' blue
Wit' keeck on de behin'.
An' den dey t'row heem out de door,
An' w'ile he ron away
De feller' standin' front de stor'
T'ink jostice done dat day.

THE SINKBOX

At las' de brant com' in de bay.
Dey com' on de nor-wes' win' las' night.
Dis evenin' I hear feller say
He see dem on de bar' a fright.
Sure I don' lose anoder day
If de sinkbox be dry an' tight.

I wish I know dey com' ba gee!
If she float at all I be out dere,
Waitin' for bre'k o' day to see,
Hearin' de callin' in de air;
I rader lie in de sinkbox, me,
Dan any oder t'ing I care.

It don' seem lak dere be moch fun
A-startin' out beneat' de star'
In de col' win' to mak de run
Across de bay down to de bar'
An' get all set af'ore de sun
Com' up and show dem w'ere you are,

But dere som' t'ing about dat game
If you don't know it can' be tol'.
Som' way it alway' be de same,
Som' way it never seem grow ol',
An' in de heart it mak' de flame
Dat kip out all de wet and col'.

Down in de box de win' don' blow,
So I light up de pipe mebbe,
An' watch de star' as out dey go
W'ile de sun crawl up out de sea
An' warm de sky into de glow
W'ere jus' afore de black night be.

'Bout den de plover start de cry
Off on de ma'sh by de sandhill.
'Bout den de gull' begin to fly
T'rough de dim light so gray an' still
You t'ink, as dey go driftin' by
Dey ghost' o' oder bird' you kill.

Den com' de shelldock an' de coot'
But me no t'ink dey wort' de shell'.
Ba gee, dat tam I mos' near shoot!

Som' tam dose shag be hard to tell.
Ah! see dose black dock mak' de scoot!
Dey look in to de box too well.

An' den *ker-r-ruck*, *ker-r-ruk* soun' clear
Across de win', an' on de sky
I see dem makin' de straight steer
Wit' de decoy right in de eye.
Kip down an' dey com' plaintee near.
Now *up*, an' let bot' barrel' fly!

Well, it's dose t'ing you don' forget.
I rader see dose beatin' wing
W'en in to de decoy dey set
Dan any oder livin' t'ing.
Ouai, more nor de salmon in de net,
Nor listen to de robin sing.

It all mak' plaintee yarn, no fear,
An' me, I tol' jus' one to you,
About de man I guide las' year
An' w'at I tell I see him do.
Ba gee, dere ain' no man roun' here
Care try an' put de sam' treeck t'rough.

We set on de deep flat' dat day;
Las' year de eel-grass t'ick for fair.
I tol' him 'fore I go away
De water deep an' he tak' care
Don' fill de box so long he stay,
Or he drown 'fore I get back dere.

So off I go an' down he lie.
Long tam it don' seem be much use.
Som' flock o' brant go flyin' by
But for de decoy' mak' refuse,
An' den I see off on de sky
Below de box an' ol' gray goose.

He lower in an' set de wing;
My man got sure shot I be boun',
But he don' seem to see not'ing,
W'en *bang*, de smoke com' out de groun'
An' den de oder barrel bring
De ol' gray goose a-tumblin' down.

An' den my feller wave his arm'
An' holler lak he all possess'.
I don' see how he com' to harm;

Mebbe de goose swim off I guess.
In dere de grass mak' plaintee calm,
But I h'ist up an' do my bes'.

Me jus' in tam; in de canoe
I haul him out an' down she roll.
An' w'at you t'ink dat feller do?
He shoot de box, his hand' so col',
An' den he tak' de ol' goose too
An' pull de shell' an' plug de hole!

Dat tak' mos' nerve I never saw.
An' now he gonè to war away
To fight for France an' Canadaw.
I t'ink if he boss dose armées
Some tam he feex dat emperaw
Jus' lak he feex dat goose dat day.





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